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SERMON

Preach'd at the

ASSIZES

HELD AT

LEICESTER,

August the 7th. 1707.

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A

SERMON

Preach'd at

LEICESTER,

Before the Honourable

Sir **Thomas Trevor**, Kt.

Lord Chief-Justice of the *Common-Pleas*;

AND

Robert Dormer, Esq;

One of the Justices of the *Common-Pleas*,

AT THE

ASSIZES,

August the 7th. 1707.

By *A. GLEN*, A. M. Rector of *Hathern*, and Late Fellow of *Jesus-Colledge*, in *Cambridge*.

Publish'd at the Request of the *HIGH-SHERIFF*, and the Gentlemen of the *GRAND JURY*.

London, Printed for *Simon Marten*, Bookseller, in *Leicester*, 1707.

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SERMON

Preach'd at

LEICESTER

Before the Honourable

Sir [illegible], Kt.

Lord Chief Justice of the Common-Pleas

AND

[illegible], Esq;

One of the Justices of the Common-Pleas

AT THE

ASSIZES,

July the 7th 1707.

London, Printed for Simon Miller, Bookseller, in Leicester, 1707.

To the RIGHT WORSHIPFUL

William Phillipps, *Esq*;

HIGH-SHERIFF of the County of

LEICESTER,

AND TO

The Honourable Gentlemen of the

Grand-Jury,

Sir *John Chester*, Bar.
Sir *George Beaumont*, Bar.
John Wilkins, Esq;
James Winstanly, Esq;
Jeffery Palmer, Esq;
Henry Tate, Esq;
Thomas Hartop, Esq;
Richard Chestyn, Esq;
William Ing, Esq;
Thomas Pochin, Esq;
Henry Bigland, Esq;
Walter Rudens, Esq;
Richard Farmer, Gent.

GENTLEMEN,

THough the Native Disadvantages of This plain Discourse, and the usual Fate of Sermons, *which are never so well liked from the* Press, *as from the* Pulpit, *might justly have Discouraged me* from

from Exposing it to the View and Perusal of the Publick; *yet the undeserv'd Favour, and unexpected Success it met with from your Request for the Publication of it, prevail'd with me to venture it Abroad: And 'tis your Opinion of it, not my own, that must recommend it to the World. What good it may do in it I cannot tell; and how many it may displease I do not much care. 'Tis enough it hath such Patrons as you on its side, whose Quality and Judgement will be a Guard, and Credit both to the Discourse and Author of it, who is, with great Respect,*

Gentlemen,

Your most Humble Servant

A. Glen.

A SERMON

Preach'd at the

ASSIZES

HELD AT

LEICESTER, &c.

Rom. VI. 21.

— For the End of those Things is Death.

SINCE *Religion* is apt to meet but with few *Platonick Lovers*, and that Men are not so Ingenuous as to Live well for the sake of *God*, nor so Careful of their own Interest, as to do it for Reward: It seems the most Effectual and Successful way to Work upon

them, by ſhowing them the Dreadful Danger of doing otherwiſe.

3. And, indeed, it would be in vain to give *Laws* to Men, and to as little purpoſe whether they Obeyed them or no, if there was not ſome certain Penalty to enforce the Obſervance of them. Hence it is, leſt Infinite *Mercy* ſhould be deſpiſed, and *Omnipotence* it ſelf out-Braved by *Obſtinate Sinners*, *God* hath Wiſely taken care to awe them here, by putting them in Mind, That their Preſent way of Living cannot always laſt: That the Time will come, when the *Enjoyments* and *Pleaſures* of the World, when the *Frolicks* and *Gayeties* of Life, when all the Delightful *Luſts* and *Sins* of Men ſhall be no more: That the Time will come, when the *Atheiſm* and *Infidelity*, the *Lewdneſs* and *Debauchery*, the *Knavery* and *Cheats*, the *Blaſphemies* and *Perjuries*, the *Robberies* and *Thefts*, the *Murders* and *Adulteries* of the Age, ſhall meet with a Juſt Puniſhment in a moſt certain Period,

For the End of theſe Things is Death.

A Consideration with so much Dreadful Reason on its side, as is enough to Startle and Alarm the most Fearless Sinner of them all, seeing he must shortly Dye, and Suffer for what he hath Done, or is at present Doing here.

And, indeed, as a Man must be without his Feeling, that can Jest upon Pain in a Fit of *Gout*, or *Stone*; so that Man must needs be without his Reason, that can Comfort himself with Witty Flourishes, and Talk of Dying hard, when *Death* and *Judgment* are in view.

It would be a needless Thing to shew you here, That *Death* is the Punishment of *Sin*; the Laws of *God* and *Men* having made it so. For 'tis *Death*, and nothing else, that is able to Encounter and Subdue the Wicked of the World; this that Tames the Greatest *Tyrants* and *Oppressors*; this that Restrains the Violence, and puts an End to the Projects of *Knaves* and *Villains*. In a Word, it is

* Death that executes Gods Design upon bad men.

Men, by removing of them hence, when by their *Impunity* and *Examples* they might make such Wretched Work, and Havock in the World, should they be Deathless, and Immortal in it.

And as needless it would be to prove, How certain and unavoidable a thing it is for Men to Dye after all their Contrivances to prevent, or Fears to make Experience of it, seeing they are always Sick, and Dayly Burying one another.

More Pertinent and Affective it will be to Consider what most Men seldom do.

First, That Human Life, at best, is very short; and Dying nearer to them than they imagine.

There is no doubt but that Wicked Men would be glad of Living Seven, or Eight Hundred Years, with all the Pleasure, Vigour, and Relish of the *Antediluvian Sinners*; but since 'tis in vain to expect it now-a-Days.

* since 'tis in vain to expect it now-a-days. they

they Promiſe however to themſelves to Live as long as any others ever did, or do, according to the preſent Standard of Human Life.

The Truth is, 'tis uſual with ſuch who are afraid of Dying, to ſet it far enough off, and a diſtance from them. Beſides, 'tis hard, in their Opinion, to think of leaving the World ſo ſoon, where they meet with ſuch Enjoyments as would make any one fond of ſtaying longer in it, whilſt they feel their Blood warm, and their Pulſe ſo brisk within them; and at the ſame time ſee ſo many of their Neighbours reach Threeſcore, or Fourſcore Years.

Indeed 'tis poſſible for a Man to Live till he is Old, as others have done before him; but then this is more than he can tell, ſince all Degrees and Ages Dye alike amongſt us. Nor is there any Reaſon for him to rely upon a long Life, which hath ſo often failed others, who Flattered themſelves at the ſame rate, and as little thought of Dying as any

of us, who ſtill Survive them. Nor need we wonder at it, there being ſuch Numberleſs Pains and Decays, ſuch Dangers and Diſtempers always ready to diſpatch us.

Or ſuppoſe a Man for once free from Chances and Diſeaſes, and let Nature do its beſt, yet it cannot hold out all along, for Age is always coming on, and Death, in Courſe, at laſt will overtake us.

Nor is Death at fartheſt at ſuch a diſtance from us; or which is the ſame thing, the utmoſt extent of Human Life is not ſo long a time as ſome imagine; for the Oldeſt Men amongſt our Neighbours, who have already paſſed through all the Stages of it, can tell us, upon Experience, That Threeſcore, or Fourſcore Years are ſoon run over, and almoſt inſenſibly eſcaped them.

All that can be ſaid, That a number of Years to come, if we could be ſure of them, is promiſing enough; but then the Miſchief of all is, That when we are arrived at ſuch

an Age as will enable us to compute the Pleasures, and Extent of Life, there cannot be much behind, because we have Lived long already. So that the remainder of it must needs be a very short time, and we, at last, when the Scene is ended, shall think it so our selves. *So soon*, as the Psalmist says, *passeth it away, and we are gone!* Psal. 90.

But *Secondly*, Tho' Human Life, at best, is very short, yet Wicked Men are sure to make it shorter still.

You have heard that Human Life, give it all the Advantages imaginable, is very short, and always near an End; and yet we find some Men so Prodigal, and careless of it, that many of them hasten Death, and shorten that Time which *God* and *Nature* would allow them.

It is usual with them to dispatch their Business quickly, and end their Days betimes, wronging their own Constitutions, and doing Execution upon themselves. The Wise Man tells

Prov 10 27. us, *That the Years of the Wicked ſhall be ſhortned.* And it may well be ſo, ſeeing a Life of Diſorder and Debauchery will make them end their Days in haſte by ſome accidental, or forced Period. For 'tis the Nature and Effect of Sin to produce all manner of Diſeaſes and Diſtempers, ſuch as break their Conſtitutions, and do Violence to their Health; it Deſtroys their Youth, and Rots their Carcaſes; it leads them into Temptation, and conſtant Dangers; it expoſeth to Unexpected and Unlucky Accidents, and ſo brings them to the Grave before their Time.

We ſee, for Inſtance, the Intemperate Man all along in hazard of his Life; he is often in Company as Wild and Unthinking as himſelf, and ſo muſt needs be Concerned in Quarrels, and in danger of Blows, and Haſty Stabs, or what the Holy Scripture calls in the Character
Prov. 23. 29. of him, *Wounds without a Cauſe.*

Beſides, the Man is not then Maſter of himſelf, and ſo becomes ſubject to Chance, and Falls; his Bones, his Neck, his Brains are

all expoſed at ſuch a Time. Or if he ſhould eſcape whilſt he is in ſuch Exceſs, yet Pains and Uneaſineſs will overtake him in a Morning, and all may end in a *Surfeit*, a *Dropſie*, or a *Fever*.

And ſometimes not ſo well; for it often happens, when all is Riotouſly Spent, that ſuch Intemperate, Perſons having been long accuſtomed to Eaſe and Idleneſs, cannot afterwards take Pains for an Honeſt Livelihood. It muſt needs be a very Melancholy Scene to ſee themſelves, and it may be, an Innocent Wife, and Hopeful Children, Walk in Rags: To the Allowance of a Pariſh they cannot ſtoop; they cannot Dig; and to Beg they are aſhamed; and ſo, being in want of Bread, and unwilling to Work for it, they Deſperately reſolve to ſeek it on the Road, which at laſt brings them to a *Gibbet*, or the *Gallows*.

The *Adulterer's* Unlawful Love is uſually fatal to himſelf; ſometimes he expires in a Quarrel with another Rival; ſometimes he falls a

eaſes will attend him from the Embraces of a *Strumpet*, as will either ſuddenly Kill, or elſe make him more Decayed than many of his Neighbours, that were Born Thirty or Forty Years before him.

6. In ſhort, there's not a Sin amongſt them all, but what in Common Courſe renders Mens Bodies weak; deſtroys their Strength; and makes them either Old or Dead, before they come half way to the Common Period and Allowance of Human Life.

Nor is it an uncommon Thing with God to ſhorten the Lives of Wicked Men, by fearful and unexpected Judgments, there being never wanting in the World ſuch as have been made ſad Examples of his Vengeance; as when Fire from Heaven deſtroyed thoſe Vile Places of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; when a Bold *Blaſphemer* hath been ſtruck Dead with an Oath in his Mouth; when the Angry Man Dies by his own, or a *Murderer* by the Hands of others.

But the more uſual way with God to ſhor-

ten the Lives, and puniſh the Villanies of Wicked Men is, by the Inſtitution and Authority of *Human Juſtice.*

Moſt certain it is, That the Supream Magiſtrate hath received a *Judicial*, and *Coercive Power* from *God*, whereby he is Enabled to Try, and Puniſh *Malefactors* with Loſs of Life. And 'tis impoſſible for the *Magiſtrate* Originally to receive ſuch Power from any other but from *God*; for ſince Vengeance, *i. e.* a Power of Puniſhing with Death, only belongs to *God*, and that no Man is Maſter of his own, or the Life of his Neighbours, it follows, That the People never had, nor can have any Right, or Title to claim, or convey ſuch Power by *Compact*, or *Collation.* So that it is by *God*, and only him, *That Kings Reign, and Princes decree Juſtice.* Prov. 8. 15

Not that our Dominion is founded in *Grace*, or as if the Right of Government, or Title to Eſtates only belonged to ſuch who are, or would be accounted

Saints. For 'tis certain that Heathen Princes have a Juſt Title to their Kingdoms, and are entruſted with the Power of Life and Death; *Such*, as our Bleſſed Saviour told *Pilate*, *is given them from Above.* No Man is Deveſted of his Natural Right, nor his Property Invaded, or Endangered by the Priviledges of the *Goſpel.* So that all Princes, *Infidel* as well as *Chriſtian*, are Sovereigns under *God*, from whom they have received their Power.

St. *John* 19. 11.

And as Princes have received ſuch Power from *God*, ſo they may, when they pleaſe, depute others for the Exerciſe and Execution of it under them. The Care of a Vaſt and Boundleſs Kingdom is a very unequal Burthen for a Single Perſon, but becomes more Eaſie and Effectual, by the Inſtitution and Appointment of *Inferiour Magiſtrates.*

Hence it is, That *Juſtice* Circulates through a Nation, and is equally Welcome, and diſpens'd in every Province. And 'tis the Apprehenſion and Expectance of it amongſt Wicked

Men

Men, that keeps the World in Awe and Order; it Secures us in the Day, and in the Night; it Guards us at Home, and on the Road. And without it the World would soon be Mad, and Mankind Unruly in it; without it, Men would turn *Fiends* and *Furies*, and be Daily cutting one anothers Throats; without it, *Knaves* and *Villains* would be Unaccountable, Matchless, and Incorrigible; without it, we can be sure of nothing we Possess, and safe in no Condition, for then our Peace, and Property, our Estates, our Families, and Lives, would all lie at the Mercy of every *Ruffian*. In a Word, without it, the World would be a very Uncomfortable Place to Live in, and Mankind the most Forlorn State of the whole Creation. So careful was *God* to Establish *Publick Justice* amongst Men, and so necessary the Administration of it is for the Security and Advantage of all the World, in the Death and Execution of Bad Men.

So that never was a more Wild Conceit than to think, as some amongst us do, That the

Primitive State of Mankind was a Lawleſs State of *Rapine* and *Hoſtility*, wherein every Man might Carve for himſelf, and Uſurp what he pleaſed without *Injuſtice*, provided he was good at *Club-Law*, or was Maſter of the *Longeſt Sword*. A State of Life, I am apt to think, the Patrons of, would be loath to try upon Experience, or if they did, would ſoon be weary of it with a Vengeance.

'Tis Obſervable of a ſort of Men amongſt us, the Tenderneſs of whoſe Conſciences, as they pretend, cannot allow the Execution of *Malefactors*, or ſo much as the neceſſary Defence of themſelves againſt their Enemies, yet being once Formed into *Communities* and *Colonies*, of their own Perſwaſion, 'tis matter of Fact, they have changed their Minds, and make no Scruple there to Fight, Hang, and Quarter, as well as others, when they have no Body to do it for them, and find it muſt be done. The Truth is, There is no Living without it either there, or any where elſe.

Nor can any thing be Argued against the Resistance, or Prosecution of *Malefactors* from the Precepts of *Christian* Charity, Loving and Forgiving Enemies. For tho' Private Persons may not take Revenge themselves, yet *God* hath left it to the *Magistrate* to do it for them, and he must, and may safely, see it done, otherwise he would bear the Sword in vain.

Believe me, it would be mistaken Charity, and undue Compassion, to spare the Enemies of Mankind, or to forgive, when the Lives of Good Men cannot be safe without the Death of Bad.

Far be it from me, and the place I am speaking in, to press Severity, or exasperate you, my Lords, against such Unfortunate Wretches, whose Misdemeanors have left their Lives, or Fortunes in your Hands. *God* hath made you, under the Queen, the Dispensers of His *Justice* to your Country-Men; imitate Him you Represent, by being Merciful, as He is Merciful; not to put a stop to *Justice*, or to

encouraged

encourage Evil Men, but only to make some favourable Allowance for all that deserves Compassion and Forgiveness.

4. And here to be Just to our *Constitution*, never did Criminals appear, or fall before *Humane Judicature* with greater Favour, or Advantage. The shortest way is never taken with them; they have Time, and Advice allowed them; the meanest Defence is always heard; there is no Condemnation without the clearest Evidence; Fairer Trials there cannot be, nor more Merciful ways of Execution; the *Rack*, *Brazen-Boots*, *Red-hot Slippers*, the *Gallies*, or the *Wheel*, are unknown, and insufferable Usages to that Good Nature, which cannot be expressed by any other Language; or found in any other Nation but our own.

And where *Justice* is thus Mercifully administer'd, it best does answer God's Design, and is most likely to procure such Blessings from

from him as are able to make a State and Kingdom Happy.

for: 10.

And give me leave freely to tell my mind, I have often thought, whatever our Enjoyments are, or may have been at Home, that all are owing, in a great Measure, to the due Execution of *Publick Justice* amongst us, which being the Care, and Effect of the Government, God hath been pleased to Bless the Nation for it, as a Nation, and Community.

For as to our selves as Men, and Single Persons, Our Lives, and Opinions are such, that we may justly expect God should deal otherwise with us. For after all our Pretences to *Conscience*, after all our Niceties, and Fineness in *Religion*, it cannot be dissembled, we are not that *Holy People*.

'Tis a Sorrowful thing to harangue here in describing the *Impieties* of the Age we live in. If some amongst us do, yet more do not believe in God. The *Saviour* of Mankind

kind hath been Depoſed, and *Morallity* preferred before his *Merits*; the *Holy Ghoſt* hath been Denied by ſome, and Counterfeited by others, to his great Diſhonour; the *Holy Sacraments*, we find, have wholly been renounced by a ſort of Men amongſt us, or Occaſionally received, which is ſuch an Inſtance of *Hypocriſie* as never was in any *Nation*, or in any *Religion*, unleſs we may be bold to
2 *Kings* 5 apply here the Caſe of *Naaman*, the *Syrian*, who, in order to keep his *Preferment*, or to get a better from his Maſter, baſely reſolved, againſt his *Conſcience*, to bow down himſelf in the Houſe of *Rimmon*. And where Places, and Offices of Truſt amongſt us are in the Hands of ſuch *Politick Communicants*, God be Merciful unto us!

Nor is this all, we have *Divided Churches*, and *United Sins*. The *Eſtabliſh'd Prieſthood*, we ſee, is Oppoſed, and Diſcouraged almoſt in every Pariſh by *Saucy*, and *Mechanick Preachers*. The Schools of the *Prophets* are Impotently Rivalled by *Clandeſtine*, and *Unlicenced*

Unlicenced Seminaries, where *Hereſie* and *Schiſm* are at Nurſe, and where the ſame Principles are revived, and taught as once deſtroyed both the *Church* and *Monarchy*; nor let us miſtake our ſelves, it is not the Vulgar Youth, but the Sons of the Gentry, too many of them, that are Educated, and Poiſoned here, and ſo become Early Enemies to our *Conſtitution*.

Moreover, Our *Manners* are Corrupted, and *Vice* grows Impudent, and Faſhionable amongſt us in all Degrees and Ages.

And after all, it were to be wiſhed, there was no Old Score of Guilt intail'd upon us; for ſince it is uſual with God to viſit the Sins of the Fathers in the Succeeding Generations, believe me then, It is not out of Date, there is no ſuch diſtance of Time, and no ſuch Signs of our *Repentance*, but that we have Reaſon ſtill to apprehend his Vengeance for

the Innocent Blood of a Slaughter'd Prince and Prelate.

Upon the whole, you ſee here is *Accummulative Guilt*, and ſuch Heinous Provocations as are enough to Challenge *Heaven*, and Ruin any Nation under it.

So that if God is pleaſed to ſpare, and bleſs us, it is not for our own *Righteouſneſs*, or for any Perſonal Worth in us, but for the Sake of the *Community* whereunto we belong, and wherein *Publick Juſtice* is Impartially adminſtered, whatever is amiſs in Private Perſons; and ſhould it once fail, I fear we have nothing elſe to ſtand in the Gap, and plead our Cauſe with God.

And ſince our Happineſs ſeems ſo much to depend upon it, the greater ſhould our Care be in the Adminiſtration and Execution of it.

Indeed, let our *Laws* be never ſo good, and our *Magiſtrates* never ſo diligent, yet after all, ſome things will be, which *Human Juſtice* cannot always diſcover or correct; ſometimes the *Criminals* may be too great; ſometimes the *Evidence* may be too little; the *Matter* may be Obſcure, or utterly Unknown; the *Witneſſes* may be Inconſiſtent, Perjured, Bribed, or Baffled, and if it happens ſo, *Human Juſtice* cannot help it: Nor does *God* expect it ſhould; for when *Human Juſtice* fails, *God* hath appointed another *Tribunal*, where the *Judge* will be Infallible; where there will be no poſſibility of Concealment, or Eſcaping; no Reſpect for the *Great*, and no Diſguiſe for the *Hypocrite*: A *Tribunal*, where a *Good Cauſe* cannot be run down with *Noiſe* or *Paſſion*, nor a *Bad One* defended by *Artifice* or *Eloquence*: A *Tribunal*, where Deeds of Darkneſs ſhall be brought to Light; where Things that were never Tryed amongſt Men; where Perſons that were never Queſtioned, or Eſcaped in their Life-time, ſhall be *Judged*;

where all the Sins of Men, tho' never ſo well concealed, or done never ſo long ago, things which they think at preſent forgotten, are quite forgotten, and never expect to hear of more, ſhall be accounted for.

And there needs but little to prove it ſo, here being ſo many Bad Men at preſent Unpuniſhed in the World, and ſo many Cauſes which were never heard, or ill decided, as ſhew there is Neceſſity and Work enough for a future Judgment.

And were there nothing elſe, the Solemn Buſineſs of *Human Judgment*, we are going to, were enough to confirm it beyond Diſpute; for if *God* Judgeth ſome Bad Men by the Miniſters of his *Juſtice* in the World, the Example of what he hath done already, or is at preſent doing, ſuppoſeth, That he will Judge the reſt hereafter, otherwiſe they would wholly go Unpuniſhed.

Nor

Nor is the preſent Solemnity of *Human Juſtice* ouly a Proof, but likewiſe a Repreſentation of a *Judgment* to come: The Order and Circumſtances of this do Prefigure and Repreſent the proceedings of the Laſt Day, when the Son of *God* himſelf ſhall *Judge* the World, which tho' it may not affect us, by reaſon of its Diſtance and Futurity, yet *God* hath not left us without *Anniverſary Alarms*, and *Viſible Characters* of it, ſuch as the preſent Appearance of *Earthly Judges* amongſt us; the *Tryals* brought before them; the *Acquittal* of the *Innocent*; the *Condemnation* of *Bad Men*; with all the *Solemnities* relative to the preſent Time; Things whereby *God* deſigns to awe the World, and put us in mind of what he intends to do hereafter with us. for: 105.

And when we ſee *Human Juſtice* thus at Work amongſt us, it is a Seaſonable Admonition to remember the *Judgment* of *God*. 18.

And

And I beſeech *God*, That the Apprehenſion of it may do Good upon us all, and make us Seriouſly bethink our ſelves what manner of Men we ought to be; let our Office, or Appointment; let our Quality, or our Age, be what it will; being always mindful where-ever we are, or what-ever we are doing, that we muſt ſhortly Dye, and after *Death* muſt come to *Judgment*.

DEO GLORIA.

FINIS.